

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, June 2, 2006

CHIEF JOINS MAYOR WILLIAMS IN URGING COUNCIL PASSAGE OF TOUGH ANTI-CRIME LEGISLATION

Chief Ramsey this week joined with Mayor Williams in urging members of the DC Council to pass legislation that would get tough on armed criminals, gangs and juvenile offenders in DC. The Mayor's Omnibus Public Safety Act of 2005 proposes a number of broad reforms in the District's criminal justice system. However, in a "markup" of the bill earlier this year, the Judiciary Committee removed or weakened key provisions of the bill dealing with some of DC's most pressing neighborhood safety problems. In a statement issued this week, Mayor Williams urged Councilmembers to restore key provisions that were taken out of his public safety reform bill by the Committee. One of those provisions would establish tough, mandatory prison sentences for two types of armed offenders. Criminals who possess deadly, armor-piercing ammunition – so-called "cop-killer bullets" – would face a mandatory sentence of at least seven years in prison upon conviction. Criminals with at least one prior felony conviction would face a minimum of one year in prison if convicted of illegally possessing a firearm in DC. Under changes made by the Judiciary Committee, these armed criminals would be eligible for release back to the community, without serving any prison time, upon conviction. "We need to send a very strong and clear message to repeat offenders who bring firearms into our city to commit crimes: your actions will not be tolerated; you will serve time in prison when we catch you," said Chief Ramsey. In the area of juvenile crime, the Mayor wants to hold juveniles accountable by insisting on strong penalties when they skip court hearings or appearances, which is a frequent problem among many juvenile suspects. Finally, the Mayor favors changing the definition of a gang to a group of as few as three people who commit crimes together, have initiation rites, and the like. Because a lot of so-called gang-activity in DC is committed by young people who are operating as part of smaller "crews," the stricter definition of a gang is needed to crack down on their activities.

- ① Read the Mayor's statement at:
<http://dc.gov/news/release.asp?id=912>
- ① The Omnibus Public Safety Act may be voted on during the Council's 27th Legislative Meeting on Tuesday, June 6. View the Council's calendar and how to contact members at:
<http://www.dccouncil.washington.dc.us>

SEVENTEEN NEW POLICE OFFICERS ARE SWORN IN, JOIN NEIGHBORHOOD PATROLS

An additional 17 officers are joining neighborhood patrols in DC following graduation ceremonies Friday afternoon at the Maurice T. Turner Jr., Institute of Police Science in Southwest. Chief Ramsey officially swore in the new officers: 16 recruits who recently completed approximately 24 weeks of training at the MPDC's Training Academy, plus one "lateral-hire" officer who previously worked for the Susquehanna Regional Police Department in Pennsylvania. All of the newly graduated officers are being assigned to neighborhood patrols in Police Service Areas (PSAs) throughout the District. In his remarks, Chief Ramsey told the new officers that while they have just completed an intense period of training, they need to remember that "every day is a training day" for members of the MPDC. "In this profession – and especially in this Department – you must be prepared to be 'in training' every day of your career," he said. "Keep on learning in this job, and I assure you that you will be better police officers – and better public servants – because of your effort."

- ① The MPDC is constantly recruiting. For information on how to become a police officer – either recruit or lateral – go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1230,q,538009.asp>

DC OFFICIALS ASSAIL REDUCTIONS IN FEDERAL HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Mayor Williams, Chief Ramsey and other DC officials expressed shock and disappointment this week upon learning that this year's federal contribution to National Capital-area homeland security initiatives was being slashed by more than 40 percent. The Mayor announced that funding under Homeland Security's largest grant program for the region – the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) – is being cut from approximately \$77 million last year to just over \$46 million this year. The UASI program funds critical anti-terrorism efforts in DC and throughout the National Capital region. The Mayor noted that UASI funding was also slashed for New York City, which like DC, is considered by most terrorism experts still to be among the top target cities for terrorists. At the same time, funding was increased in a number of other cities that, unlike New York and DC, have not been targeted by terrorists in the past. In its funding formula, the US Department of Homeland Security said DC ranked among the bottom 25 percent of states and territories in terms of terrorism risk. Under a separate grant program – the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) – DC is taking an even larger percentage cut in funds than with the UASI program. DC received approximately \$9.2 million under the SHSP program last year, but will receive less than half that amount – about \$4.3 million – this year. Chief Ramsey noted that DC's share of SHSP funds is lower than in every other state and territory in the country except for the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands. Mayor Williams noted, "I am disappointed that the Department of Homeland Security cut funding for the District and the region, even more so because so many dollars continue to be spent in rural areas that are far less likely to emerge as targets."

REPORTS OF SERIOUS CRIME RISE SLIGHTLY DURING MAY

The number of serious crimes reported to the police rose by about 2 percent in May when compared with the same month of 2005, according to preliminary statistics from the MPDC. There were 2,692 serious crimes reported in DC last month, compared with 2,631 in May 2005. While property crime was down overall in May, there were increases last month in all categories of violent crime. Robberies rose by 18 percent, from 290 to 342, and assaults with a deadly weapon (ADW) were up 10 percent, from 274 to 302. Homicides also increased in May, from 9 to 15, but were still down 6 percent for the year. Year to date, sexual assaults are down 4 percent and ADWs, 5 percent. Robberies, however, have risen by 12 percent this year. Among property crimes, thefts (-12%) and stolen autos (-8%) were down last month, while burglaries (+3%) and thefts from autos (+18%) increased. Through the first five months of the year, reported crime in the District is up by about 4 percent, according to the preliminary statistics, including a 3 percent rise in violent crime and a 4 percent increase in property offenses. So far this year, five of the seven police districts have recorded decreases in serious crime; the First and Third districts have registered increases.

NEWS & NOTES

Drug Free Zones. Because the summer months can bring an increase in illegal drug activity in some areas, the MPDC is stepping up its use of drug free zones. DC's anti-loitering law allows the Police Chief to declare certain areas as "drug free zones," in which it is unlawful for a group of two or more persons to congregate in a public space or property in that area for the purpose of using, purchasing or selling illegal drugs. For more information, including a listing of upcoming drug free zones, go to: http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1238,q,542244,mpdcNav_GID,1541.asp.

- ① Read the Mayor's statement at:
<http://dc.gov/news/release.asp?id=911>
- ① For information on emergency preparedness and homeland security in DC, visit:
http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1237,q,547382,mpdcNav_GID,1547.asp
- ① View the latest preliminary crime statistics for each of the seven police district and DC as a whole at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,a,1239,q,543329.asp>
- ① The MPDC publishes weekly reports on arrests of both adult and juvenile suspects. Access these statistics at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/mpdc/cwp/view,A,1232,Q,559499.asp>

DATA BOX

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| Homicides | as of 6/2/06 |
| ◆ 2006: 64 | |
| ◆ 2005: 66 | |
| ◆ % Change: -3.0% | |
| ◆ Closure Rate: 45.3% (29 closures) | |
| Adult Arrests | week end. 5/27/06 |
| ◆ Total: 1,049 | |
| ◆ Weapons: 26 | |
| ◆ Robbery: 7 | |
| ◆ Unauthorized Use of Vehicle: 18 | |
| ◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 54 | |
| ◆ Narcotics: 186 | |
| Juvenile Activity | week end. 5/27/06 |
| ◆ Total Arrests: 84 | |
| ◆ Robbery: 3 | |
| ◆ Curfew Violations: 85 | |
| ◆ Truants: 107 | |
| Firearm Recoveries | as of 5/30/06 |
| ◆ May: 171 | |
| ◆ 2006 Total: 987 | |
| Traffic Fatalities | as of 6/2/06 |
| ◆ 2006: 21 | |
| ◆ 2005: 20 | |
| ◆ % Change: +5.0% | |

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.